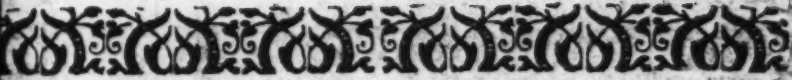


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S E R M O N

On *Colossians*, iii. 4.



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Christ the Life of true Believers, and their
Appearance with him in Glory.

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S E R M O N

On Colossians, III. 4.

Preach'd at the West Church in *Boston*,
October, 4th 1741.

By WILLIAM HOOPER, A. M. *Pastor*
of the said Church. *L*

Published at the earnest Desire of the Hearers.

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ABERDEEN:

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Christ the Life of true Believers,

A SERMON, &c.

Col. iii. 4. *When Christ who is our Life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in Glory.*

MY Brethren, our Lord Jesus Christ is a Pattern and Representation of all his faithful Followers. 'Tis impossible for us to be his Disciples and to partake of the Happiness of the Gospel, unless we be conformed to our Lord and Master, and are, as it were, so many Copies of this divine Original. Whilst he lived in this World among Mankind, he was strictly pious, holy, righteous and good; all his Thoughts, Wishes and Designs tended to Heaven, from whence he came. At the same Time, he lived in a poor and low Condition, he suffered Pain and Affliction, and was at last put to a cruel and ignominious Death. But very soon he

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arose

arose again from the Dead, ascended to Heaven, and was exalted to the highest Degree of Glory and Happiness at the Right Hand of the Father.

Such is thy Life in this World, sincere Christian, and such are thy Hopes with Respect to a future State. Here it is thy great Business to shun every wicked and evil Inclination and Practice, to study a divine Temper and Disposition of Mind, and to endeavour a perfect Obedience to the Commands of God, according to the Pattern and Example of thy blessed Saviour. Thou art always engaged in fighting with Flesh and Blood, thou art surrounded with spiritual Enemies, often involved in Calamities and Afflictions, and at last thou shalt suffer Death, and thy Body shall be laid in the Grave. But when the Son of Man shall come in his Glory to judge the World, thy Body shall be raised from Corruption, and united to thy Soul again, and then thou shalt be glorious, as thy Saviour is glorious. This is the great and important Truth taught us by the Apostle in the Words of our Text, *When Christ who is our Life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in Glory.*

IN the Management of this Subject, we shall observe this Method.

I. WE shall consider this Phrase, *Christ who is our Life.*

II. THE Appearance of Jesus Christ : *When he who is our Life shall appear.*

III. THE Glory in which he shall appear : *He shall appear in Glory.*

IV. THE Appearance of all true Christians *with him in Glory.*

THESE

These are the principal Parts of what I propose to deliver upon this Subject. May God make our Discourse promote his Glory, and your spiritual and eternal Happiness. To begin with the

FIRST Thing proposed, namely, to consider this Phrase, *Christ who is our Life*. That we may the better understand the Meaning of the Apostle, it will be necessary to reflect on the preceeding Verses. In the second Verse of this Chapter, the Apostle exhorts us to *set our Affections on Things above, not on Things on the Earth*; that is, to be chiefly solicitous for the excellent and glorious Things that are in Heaven, and the Means which God hath appointed for the obtaining of them, and not to mind such poor Matters, as insignificant Rites and Observances, and sensual worldly Enjoyments. But because he knew that it is difficult for us to raise our Affections to Heaven, beside the Argument he made Use of in the first Verse to this Purpose, taken from the Resurrection of Christ, and his glorious Dominion in those Places to which he calls us, he says in the third Verse, *You are dead, and your Life is hid with Christ in God*: You are dead to all sinful Thoughts, Desires and Actions; you have formerly renounced every Thing contrary to the Laws of Religion and Virtue, and you are resolved to mind the sensual Enjoyments of this World no more than if you were dead. *But though you be dead to Sin, you are alive to God*; you have devoted your Lives, all the Affections and Powers of your Souls, all the Abilities of your Bodies, and all your outward Advantages to the Cause of Jesus Christ and of his Gospel. 'Tis true, this Life is in a great Measure hid from the World, *the truest and best Religion being most private*, so that thoughtless Men cannot

cannot perceive any Thing beautiful and excellent in you : On the contrary, they look upon you as the most contemptible People upon Earth, and your Lives as Folly and Extravagance. But *your Life is hid in God* ; by this the Apostle means, that the Life of true Believers is sure and certain. It does not depend upon, nor is deposited with Men, weak and changeable Creatures ; but it is in the Keeping of God, who is infinite in Power, and with whom there is no Variableness nor Shadow of turning ; therefore you have no Reason to doubt of enjoying and having it carried to Perfection. He says likewise, That it is *hid with Christ* ; that is, no Wonder it does not appear what good Men are now, nor what they shall be hereafter, for even Jesus Christ is hid from the World, his glorious Person being in the highest Heavens quite out of our Sight, and his Kingdom being supported and governed here below by the secret Influences of his Spirit. But our Life's being hid with Christ especially signifies, that Jesus Christ is the Fountain and Author of our Life, that he merited it by what he did and suffered, and that it is by his Holy Spirit that it is produced in us. Hence the Evangelist *John* says, Chap. i. 4. *In him was Life, and that Life was the Light of Men.* And *Acts* iii. 15. He is called *the Prince of Life*. Since then our Life is purchased by Jesus Christ, and deposited with God, we may be assured that *when Christ who is our Life shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in Glory.*

A N D now from the preceeding Verses, as well as from our Text itself, it is plain, that by Jesus Christ his being our Life, we are to understand, that he is the Cause and Author of our spiritual
and

and heavenly Life, that it depends upon him entirely, and that out of him we have not the least Degree, nor the least Spark of Life. As the Son of God at first created the World and all Things that are therein, and as he preserves and governs them all, according to these Words of the Apostle, *Col. i. 16. By him all Things were created, that are in Heaven, and that are on Earth, visible and invisible, whether they be Thrones or Dominions, or Principalities, or Powers ; All Things were created by him : And Heb. i. 6. He upholds all Things by the Word of his Power ;* So it is he that gives Being to the Elect World, that sustains, nourishes and perfects them all. But more particularly Jesus Christ is our Life,

FIRST, as it is through him that we are justified, This, no doubt, is partly the Meaning of the Apostle in these Words ; and this great Blessing is in other Places of Scripture called Life, as in *Rom. v. 18. By the Righteousness of One, the free Gift came upon all Men to Justification of Life.* As we are dead in Law, while we are under the Sentence of Condemnation ; so being justified, being pardoned and accepted of God, we are restored to Life. By Nature we are under the Condemnation of the Law, and liable to the Wrath of God ; but by Virtue of the Obedience of Jesus Christ, embraced by a lively Faith, we are freed from the Curse of the Law, and made righteous in the Sight of God. This I take to be the Meaning of that Passage, *Phil. iii. 9. That I may be found in Christ, not having mine own Righteousness which is of the Law, but that which is through the Faith of Christ, the Righteousness which is of God by Faith.*

Secondly,

Secondly, *Jesus Christ is our Life*, as it is through him that we are sanctified. This especially is the Meaning of the Apostle when he says, *Jesus Christ is our Life*; he purifies our Hearts and Manners from all Wickedness and Vice, and forms us into the divine Image, in *Righteousness* and *true Holiness*. He not only purchased this for us, but he works it in us; he reveals it to us in the Gospel, the Nature of Religion and Virtue; he hath given us a perfect and moving Pattern of it in his own Person; he hath recommended it with the most powerful Arguments and Motives; he imprints it upon our Minds and Hearts by his holy Spirit; he cherishes it and causes it to grow up to Perfection. To this Purpose we may apply the Words of the Apostle, *Gal. ii. 20. I live, yet not I, but Jesus Christ liveth in me: And the Life which I now live in the Flesh, I live by the Faith of the Son of God who loved me, and gave himself for me.* Jesus Christ begins, carries on, and accomplishes the Work of Sanctification in our Hearts and Lives, by Virtue of his Communion with us, as he is the Head and Root which give Sap and Nourishment to the Members and Branches.

THIRDLY, *Jesus Christ is our Life*, as he bestows eternal Happiness upon us. This is often called Life, and eternal Life. Jesus Christ merited this mighty Blessing for all those that believe in him; and having received it as a Recompence of his Obedience he will certainly bestow it upon them. *My Sheep hear my Voice*, says our Saviour, *John x. 28. and I know them, and they follow me. And I give unto them eternal Life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my Hand.* Jesus Christ then is our Life, as he justifies, sanctifies and glorifies us. These are the principal Benefits he hath

hath purchased, and which those that believe in him are said to be Partakers of ; and they are set forth to us in the Name of *Life*, because they are the most *excellent and desireable Blessings*.

BEFORE we conclude this Head, let us reflect a little upon the Excellency of this Life we receive from Jesus Christ. It is the Perfection, the Happiness and Glory of human Nature. It constitutes us Objects of the Love of the greatest and the best of Beings, and entitles us to his peculiar Care. A Life of Sin makes us hated by a just and holy God, and liable to all the Curses of the Law. This proceeds from foolish, sensual, base and wicked Desires and Inclinations ; the other from a divine Faith, a reasonable Love, and a just and lively Gratitude. The one consists in Error and Ignorance, in Profanity and Unrighteousness, in Hatred and Malice ; the other in the Exercise of Reason and Understanding, of Devotion and Goodness, of Gratitude and Love. The one is attended with continual Pain and Uneasiness in this World, and with eternal Misery in the next ; the other with Tranquillity of Soul here, with Joy unspeakable and full of Glory hereafter. In a Word, by the one we degenerate into Brutes, and become fit Company for cursed Spirits only ; by the other we become Partakers of the divine Nature, and fit for the blessed Society in Heaven. The one is Death rather than Life ; accordingly *wicked Men are said to be dead in Trespasses and Sins* ; and, *she that liveth in Pleasure is dead while she liveth* ; the other only is worthy the Name of Life, and hence the Scripture very often absolutely calls it Life : *He that hath the Son hath Life ; and he that hath not the Son hath not Life ; and he that believeth in the Son hath passed from Death*

to Life. O glorious Life ! One Day passed according to thy Precepts, is worth an Eternity in Sin.

NOW, *my Brethren*, since Jesus Christ is our Life, since through him we are beloved of God, sanctified and made meet for Heaven, and entiled to it by Virtue of his Purchase, the Consequence of the Apostle is plain and strong, *That when he shall appear, we shall also appear with him in Glory* ; which brings me to the

SECOND general Head, which was to speak of the *Appearance of Jesus Christ.* *When he who is our Life shall appear.* In the Fulness of Time he appeared in Flesh, cloathed with human Nature, as the Apostle says, *God manifested in the Flesh.* He will appear again at the End of the World to judge all Mankind, and to render to every one according to their Deeds. He is now above the highest Heavens, far hid from the mortal Eyes. 'Tis by Faith only that we know of his Existence. But one Day, he will descend from his Seat at the right Hand of God, and appear visible to all the World, the Son of God, and the Author of our Salvation.

THE Proof of this is evident from numberless Passages of Scripture ; *Matth. xvi. 17. The Son of Man shall come in the Glory of his Father, with his holy Angels, and then shall he reward every one according to his Work :* And *Acts i. 11. This same Jesus*, said the Men in white, to the Disciples, as they were gazing up to Heaven, when our Saviour ascended, *This same Jesus who is taken from you to Heaven, shall come in like Manner as ye have seen him go to Heaven :* And *2 Thess. i. 17. When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels, in flaming Fire, taking Vengeance on all*

all them that know not God, and obey not the Voice of his Son. But we need not spend Time in quoting Texts to prove this important Truth. No Man that believes the Scripture can deny it.

INDEED some antient Hereticks from a mistaken Notion of Things, and a false Explanation of certain Passages of Scripture, maintained that the Resurrection was already past, and consequently that Jesus Christ would not appear again at the End of the World, as we say he will. But their Opinion is so contrary to Scripture, that we need only to mention it, in order to shew its Absurdity.

THE Objection of the Infidels against this Doctrine is more dangerous than that of the ancient Hereticks. These allowed of a future State of Rewards and Punishments, though they denied the Appearance of Jesus Christ : But the Infidels deny both. Our souls, say they, are made of the same Matter with our Bodies, and with them they die and perish for ever ; therefore there is no Day of Judgement, no Appearance of Jesus Christ. As Fear first made the Gods of the Heathens ; so it was Politicians and designing Men that invented a general Judgment, and Rewards and Punishments in another World. The Notions of a future State, and of the terrible Appearance of a crucified Man, are vain Chimeras and Scare-Crows, to beget and cherish a superstitious Respect, and a base Servitude among the People.

BUT beside the Arguments that serve to prove the Truth of the sacred Oracles, and consequently the Truth of a Day of Judgment, there are some drawn immediately from the Principles of natural Light, which are sufficient to stop the Mouths of Unbelievers, at least to make them very modest

in their Opposition to our Doctrine, and to consider well before they venture much upon their own Scheme. If our Souls perish with our Bodies, if there is no future State; why have Mankind in all Places and Ages of the World universally believed the contrary, and that they shall be happy or miserable in another World according to their Deserts? Can we imagine that an infinitely wise and good God would thus cheat and delude the Apprehensions and Understandings of Mankind? If our Souls perish with our Bodies, if there is no future State; how can you vindicate the divine Perfections, his Wisdom, Power and Goodness which are all concerned in this Point? Ought you not to think that the Wisdom of God having made Man a reasonable Soul, and capable of spiritual Refreshments and the Joys of another World, is concerned to carry us into a future State, where all our reasonable Faculties shall be exercised and our spiritual Taste shall be satisfied? Ought you not to think that Things being promiscuously administred in this Life, there must be another, wherein all Things shall appear regular and orderly, and the Justice of God shall be clearly manifested? Ought you not to think that the divine Goodness will continue the Life of Man longer than that of the Brutes so far beneath him in Perfection? Must we die like the Beasts? If our Souls die with our Bodies, if there is no future State, whence is it that Men are so desirous to purchase a lasting Fame to themselves? Whence this inbred Propensity, this natural Tendency to Immortality? Why do we shrink back into ourselves, and startle at Annihilation? Why have we Peace and Quiet in our Minds, when we do a good Action, and a secret Hope that we shall be one Day rewarded for it?

it ? Why are we seized with Horror when we do a bad Action, and apprehensive that we shall one Day be punished for it ? 'Tis God that causes these Thoughts, and Desires, and Hopes and Fears in our Breasts. 'Tis the supreme Disposer of all Things that points out another World, and persuades Mankind of an eternal Duration beyond the Grave.

WHAT is it that assures thee, thou Infidel, that there is no Day of Judgement, no future State ? 'Tis not Reason ; for Reason tells us, that there is in Man a Principle superior to Matter, and which in all Probability will never die ; that the Nature of God, the Nature of Man, the Nature of Virtue and Vice declare loud for another World wherein every one shall be happy or miserable according as he hath behaved in this Life. Perhaps thou believest that there is no Day of Judgment, no future State, because thou doubtest of it. This is the Case of the Generality of Infidels. They change their Doubts and their Uncertainties into Articles of Faith. But a Faith founded upon Doubts and Uncertainties, is it a reasonable Faith ? Thy Faith ought to be proportioned to the Principle from which it flows. And as this Principle is Doubt and Uncertainty, thou canst not build any Thing firm and stable upon it. Leave thy Doubts and thine Uncertainties ; cease to flatter thy self with the false Idea of Liberty. Thou believest assuredly that there is no Day of Judgment, because thou doubtest of it : Is this reasonable ? Where is the Man of the least Degree of Consideration, that will hazard a great Good upon a Principle like this ? If there is no Day of Judgment, no future State, the good Man loses the Pleasure of being wicked, and of following
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his criminal, base and brutish Passions, which afford but a poor Pleasure at best. But if there is a Day of Judgment, profane, and vitious Man, what dost thou lose ! We dare not describe his Misery : We are not able to describe it ; for the Torments of the Damned, as well as the Joys of the Blessed are now inexpressible. Thou lovest an eternal Happiness, thou exposest thy self to the most cruel Torments, to intollerable Remorse, that will never end, that will never have the least Intermiſſion.

H O W sweet, how transporting the Hope of a blessed Immortality, of a Perfection and Happiness without Bounds or without End, in Society of Saints and Angels, and in the immediate Presence of God ! Indeed this Hope obliges us to be strictly pious and good, to be holy in all Manner of Conversation, and to deny ourselves the Enjoyment of vain, sensual and worldly Delights. But are the Pleasures of Sin, that are often attended with Pain and Disgrace, even here in this World, are they to be preferred to the infinite and eternal Happiness, we hope for ? Must we forgo an everlasting and ravishing Joy, for a short and unsatisfying Felicity ? Enter into thy self, thou profane Man, hearken to thy Reason, consider the Suggestions of Futurity that arise in thy Soul, even in Spite of all thy Endeavours to the contrary, and which prompt thee to escape eternal Misery and to save thy self. Having considered the *Appearance of Jesus Christ*, let us proceed to consider the Manner of it, *he shall appear in Glory*, which was the

T H I R D General Head we proposed. It is impossible for us to express or conceive the Glory of our Lord Jesus Christ at his Appearance ; We have neither Words nor Comparisons to make it known

known by. He says himself, *Matth. xvi. 17. He shall come in the Glory of his Father*; that is, in all the Majesty, Power and Authority of God, in Comparison with which the greatest Pomp and Magnificence of the World, is but as nothing and Vanity. We shall mention a few general Things.

FIRST, Jesus Christ at his second Coming, will appear glorious in his Person. When he was here upon Earth, *He had no Beauty nor Comeliness that Men should desire him; his Visage was more marred than any Man, and his Form than the Sons of Men.* But he will appear at that Day in another Form, in a Body beautiful and glorious. What Sort of a Body, the glorified Body of our Saviour will be, may in some Measure be gathered from the History of his Transfiguration, where *his Face* is described to have *shined like the Sun, and his Raiment to have become shining, exceeding white as Snow,* *Matth. xvii.* and from the Description of his Appearance, to *John the Divine, Rev. i. 14. His Head and his Hairs were white like Wool, as white as Snow, and his Eyes were as a Flame of Fire, and his Feet like unto fine Brass, as if they burned in a Furnace.* *Moses's* conversing a few Days with God upon the Mount, made his Face to shine, so that the Children of *Israel* were not able to look upon it, for the Brightness of it. How glorious then must the Body of Jesus Christ be, when he shall descend from conversing with the Father, and from sitting at his right Hand in the highest Heavens! It will outshine the Sun in its greatest Radiancy; all the heavenly Bodies shall receive new Light from the Glory of his Presence. The Sun shall appear dark, and the Moon as Blood, when compared to his Light and Glory.

SECONDLY, The Glory of Jesus Christ will consist in the Number of his Adorers. He will descend from Heaven sitting upon a Cloud of Glory with a vast and numberless Army of Angels, whom he will summon from all the Provinces of the Universe, to wait upon his Person. And whilst all that are alive upon the Earth are gazing at the Son of God and his heavenly Host, as they descend, one of the Angels will sound a dreadful Trumpet, which will roll the Circuit of the Creation, make the Earth to tremble and shake, and piercing into the deepest Tombs, will awake all the Dead, and call them to the Presence of the great Judge. Around our Saviour likewise will be the Saints of all Kindreds, and of all Nations, come out of Tribulation, the Martyrs with Palms in their Hands, the Virgins with white Robes, the Church in pure Linnen with all her Children, casting down their Crowns before the Throne of the Lamb, and singing this Song, *To him that sits upon the Throne, to the Lamb that was slain, and redeemed us by his Blood, be the Honour and Glory, the Dominion and Power.* Wicked Men and Devils shall then likewise bow the Knee to the Son of God. Here they opposed his Interest, they contemned him, they affronted him; but then they shall see their Folly, and fall down and adore him.

THIRDLY, The Glory of Jesus Christ at his Appearance will consist in his great and extensive Power. He will call all the World to appear before him, and to receive Sentence from his Mouth. None shall be able to resist his Power. The Judges of the Earth, the great Princes, the mighty Emperors, shall not be exempted any more than the poorest, the meanest, and weakest of Mankind.

Tribes

Tribes Provinces, Armies, Nations, Worlds, shall be gathered together and pour along towards the Judgment Seat of Christ, and *Adam* with all his Sons shall appear upon even Ground and upon equal Terms. He will lay open the Secrets of all Mens Hearts; his Condemnation of the wicked will be so evident and just, that they themselves shall acknowledge it. Yes, unhappy Wretches, you shall have the Confusion to condemn yourselves, your Punishment shall be everlasting, your Torments insupportable. Death the King of Terrors, and the most cruel of Enemies, shall be swallowed up in Victory at the Appearance of Jesus Christ. The Devils shall be spoiled of all their Power, and loaded with Chains of Darknes, *the Foundations of the Earth shall be shaken, the Heavens shall pass away with a great Noise, and the Elements shall melt with fervent Heat, for we look for a new Heaven and a new Earth.*

A N D as the Power of Jesus Christ will be manifested in punishing wicked Men and Devils, so in saving the wise and good. You that renounce the Follies and Corruptions of the World, that make the Laws of Jesus Christ the Rule of your Conduct that take Care to secure an Interest in his Favour, by loving and obeying him, you have nothing to be afraid of from the glorious Power of the Son of Man. Towards you, he will exercise Goodness and Mercy, in delivering you from all the Remainers of Sin, and crowning you with Perfection and Happiness.

W H A T Glory to the Son of God to descend from Heaven in the Glory of his Father, and with all the Angels his Father's Ministers! What a Glory to the great Shepherd and Bishop of Souls,
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to see his Followers who were scattered like lost Sheep, gathered together in the Regions of Immortality, and triumphing over their Enemies ! What Glory to the Author and Teacher of Truth, to see Ignorance and Error destroyed, and Knowledge and Truth established ! What a Glory to the Lover of Mankind, to see Sin and Misery banished, from among them, and Righteousness and Happiness prevailing and flourishing for ever ! *Then shall you behold the Word that was made Flesh, and dwelt among us, full of Grace and Truth ; then shall you behold his Glory, the Glory as of the only begotten of the Father.* He was brought forth in a Stable, and laid in a Manger instead of a Cradle ; he shall appear in all the Majesty of Heaven : He lived in a mean and obscure Condition ; he shall come again in the highest Degree of Power and Grandeur : He had not where to lay his Head ; he shall appear Possessor of the Universe, and the sovereign Lord of Heaven and of Earth : He was despised and rejected of Men ; he shall be attended on by Angels, and all the World shall bow the Knee to him : He was arraigned and condemned, and crucified by earthly Powers ; he shall summon all both small and great, the Kings and great Men, and Judges of the Earth, to appear at his Bar, and to receive Sentence from his Mouth. The two different States of this Person are the Wonder of Mankind, and not of Mankind only, but likewise of the Angels above, that desire to look into them. Let us in the

FOURTH Place, consider the Appearance of all true Christians with their Saviour in Glory : *You shall appear with him in Glory.* Here in this World the true Christian is often hid from the Ob-

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servation of Mankind, his Graces are weak and imperfect ; sometimes he conceals himself under a Vail of Humility ; at other Times he is covered with a Cloud of Affliction ; so that it does not appear either what he is, or what he shall be ; and Death seizes him as well as the wicked Man, and lays him low in the Dust. But when Jesus Christ shall appear in Glory, the Body of the true Believer shall be raised again out of the Grave and united to his Soul, he shall be made perfect in Holiness, openly acknowledged and acquitted before all the World, and rewarded with eternal Felicity and Glory in Heaven.

FIRST, At the Appearance of Jesus Christ, our Bodies shall be raised out of the Grave, glorious Bodies. What Horror will fill the Souls of wicked Men, when they shall see themselves obliged to re-enter their Bodies, not to enjoy sinful Pleasures, as formerly, but in Order to appear before the Tribunal of God, and to be judged and condemned by him ? What must be their Shame at the Sight of those Bodies, those wretched Bodies, which were the Instruments of their Rebellion and Ingratitude, and which are about to be the Instruments of their eternal Misery ? On the other Hand, what will be the Joy of upright and virtuous Souls, to re-unite it self to these very Bodies, that perhaps carried the Marks of the Lord Jesus, and that will not only be cloathed with Glory to all Eternity, but even be assisting to the Souls in their Operations ?

THE Apostle *Paul* speaking of the Resurrection of the Body, says, *Cor. xv. 42. 43. 44. It is sown in Corruption, it is raised in Incorruption ; It is sown in Dishonour, it is raised in Glory ; it is sown*
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in Weakness, it is raised in Power ; it is sown a natural Body, it is raised a spiritual Body. The same Bodies that died, shall be raised again, but they shall be raised with very great Alterations. *It is sown in Corruption, it shall be raised in Incorruption.* Our Bodies here in this World, are made up of such Particles, and they are framed after such a Manner, that they are continually tending to Corruption and Dissolution ; but at the Appearance of Jesus Christ, they shall be freed from all Seeds of Mortality and Corruption, and be made incorruptible and immortal Substances, like the Heavens in which they shall dwell for ever ; for so our Saviour says of those that shall be accounted worthy to attain to this blessed Resurrection, that they *cannot die any more.* *It is sown in Dishonour, it is raised in Glory ;* our Bodies when they are buried, are base and vile, not to be endured above Ground for their ghastly Looks and nauseous Putrefaction. At the Appearance of Jesus Christ, they shall be transformed into bright, beautiful and glorious Bodies ; for so our Saviour assures us, that after the Resurrection, *the righteous shall shine as Stars in the Firmament.* *It is sown in Weakness, it shall be raised in Power ;* our Bodies now are weak and feeble, liable to many Indispositions and Diseases, capable of doing very little, but of suffering much. At the Resurrection they shall be freed from all Weakness, Diseases, and Infirmities, and be made strong, active, and vigorous, so as even to be helpful to the Soul in it's spiritual Operations ; *for God shall wipe away all Tears from their Eyes, and there shall be no more Death, neither shall there be any more Pain ; for the former Things are passed away.* Rev. xxi.

4. *It is sown a natural Body, it is raised a spiritu-*

al Body; our Bodies now must be repaired with suitable Nourishment, kept in Health with Labour and Exercise, and refreshed with sensual Pleasures. At the Appearance of Jesus Christ, they shall be made spiritual Bodies: Not that they shall be converted into Spirits, for they will still remain Bodies, but they shall be wrought into pure and fine Substances, so as no more to want to eat or drink, or to be refreshed, or kept in Order, with gross and carnal Enjoyments; for as our Saviour says, *Luke xx. 35. They neither marry, nor are given in Marriage, but they are like to the Angels in Heaven.* Such shall be the Glory of the Bodies of good Men at the Appearance of Jesus Christ: And if their Bodies shall be so glorious, what will be their Souls, that are capable of far greater Perfection? For

SECONDLY, our Bodies, so shall our Souls appear with Jesus Christ in Glory. Wherein the Glory of our Souls will then consist, and how great it will be, we cannot particularly describe to you. Only in general, all our Sins shall be perfectly done away, *and we shall be cloathed with Robes washed and made white in the Blood of the Lamb. When the Marriage of the Lamb shall come, and his Wife shall be ready, she shall be arrayed in fine Linnen, clean and white, which is the Righteousness of the Saints.* Then our Souls shall be freed from all Error, Ignorance and Prejudice, and endowed with full and perfect Knowledge. Here our Understandings are low and weak, suited to this State of Mortality; but at the Resurrection they shall be highly elevated, and made capable of the greatest Manifestations of Truth, the sublimest Discoveries of the divine Perfections, and of every Thing that may any Way
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make us perfect or happy. Here we see through a *Glass*, but then we shall see *Face to Face*. Now we have some small and imperfect Discoveries of things, as at a great Distance; but at that Day we shall see Things distinctly in their full and true Dimensions. Now we know in *Part only*; but then we shall know God and other Beings, as they know us. No Clouds, no Darkness shall cover our Minds in that glorious State: We shall dwell in Circles of Light, in the Sun-shine of the Almighty's Presence.

A N D as our Souls shall be perfect in Knowledge, so shall they be free from all Corruption and Disorder, and endued with pure and regular Desires and Inclinations. Here there are Spots and Blemishes in the best of Men; but then they shall *be holy as God is holy*; they shall have all the Wisdom and Sanctity their exalted Natures are capable of. And how glorious will our Souls then appear, when they shall be filled with true and excellent Knowledge, and with the greatest Degrees of Holiness! *But Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard; neither hath it entered into the Heart of Man to conceive, the Glory which God hath prepared for those that love him.*

T H I R D L Y, Our Souls and Bodies thus refined and exalted, shall be again united in one Person, and appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ. What this Judgment Seat will be, and where it will be placed, we know not certainly. Only it is probable it will be placed in the Air, and composed of a radiant Cloud, streaming with Light, and throwing forth a Flood of Glory. Hence it is called, *The Throne of his Glory*; and out of it are said to proceed Lightnings and Thunderings. Before
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this glorious Tribunal shall appear all the Redeemed of the Lord, the Prophets, the Apostles, the Martyrs, the whole Church throughout the World, and they shall all give an Account of themselves to God. Then their Innocence shall be vindicated, the Scandal that was thrown upon them by the World, shall be wiped off before Men and Angels, their secret Acts of Piety and Virtue shall be proclaimed, their Faith, and Repentance for their Sins declared, the divine Goodness and Mercy manifested, and the powerful Virtue of the Blood of Jesus Christ in the Sanctification of Believers made evident to the vast Assembly of Spirits, after they have been acquitted, the Judge shall rise out of his flaming Throne, and say to them with an audible Voice, and smiling Majesty, *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World*; to which no Doubt their Voices will immediately resound, *Hallelujah, Salvation and Glory to him that sits upon the Throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever*. After which he will say to the wicked on his left Hand, *Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels*. What fearful Shrieks and Lamentations will then be heard from that miserable Company? Lord, who can dwell with devouring Fire: Who can inhabit everlasting Burnings?

FOURTHLY, when the Sentence shall be pronounced, the Wicked shall be carried to the Place of eternal Torments; and the Judge will arise from his Throne, and ascend to Heaven in Triumph and Glory, attended with all his Saints and Angels, who as they follow him through the Air, will with loud Hosannas and triumphant Acclamations,

clamations, celebrate the Praises of their Redeemer: *To him that redeemed them and washed them in his Blood, and made them Kings and Priests to God for ever and ever. Then the Ransomed of the Lord shall return to Zion with Songs and everlasting Joy upon their Heads. They shall stand before him, and serve him Day and Night in his Temple, and he that sits upon the Throne shall dwell among them.*

AS to the particular Time when Jesus Christ shall thus appear in Glory, we are altogether ignorant of it. This is one of these Secrets which God for wise Reasons, hath reserved in his own Power. *Of that Day and Hour, knoweth no Man, no, not even the Angels in Heaven, neither the Son, but the Father, Matth. xiii. 32.* The primitive Christians, from a Mistake of some Passages in Scripture, and an impatient Desire to be freed from their grievous Persecutions, thought that the Appearance of the Son of Man was then at Hand. And some in the last Century were so rash as to fix the particular Year of his Appearance. But the Event hath shewn their Folly. How could they pretend to foretell the particular Time of the Appearance of Jesus Christ, when Jesus Christ himself as to his human Nature, was ignorant of it? It is a certain Truth, that Jesus Christ shall appear in Glory, and that we shall appear with him; and this is sufficient. Let us fix here, *my Brethren*, and be assured, *that if our Life is hid with Christ in God, when Christ who is our Life shall appear, we shall also appear with him in Glory.*

AND now let us apply what hath been said in a few Inferences. We might take Notice of a great many important Lessons from this glorious Subject, but we shall only mention the following.

A P P L I C A T I O N.

FIRST, *Is Jesus Christ our Life?* What Love and Gratitude, Trust and Confidence, Subjection and Obedience do we owe him? Is it through him that God is reconciled to us, and treats us with peculiar Love and Complacency? Is it he that sanctifies and makes us Partakers of the divine Nature? And is he preparing Mansions of Bliss for us in Heaven? Let us warm our Hearts with Love and Gratitude to our most merciful Redeemer, *who loved us, and gave himself for us.* Let us call upon our Souls, and all that is within us to praise and magnify his Name, who delivered us from Sin and Misery, and who makes us perfect and happy, who causes us to pass our Lives comfortably in this World, and who will carry us to unspeakable Felicity and Glory in another. We love and are grateful to Men, who save us from temporal Death and bestow upon us the Necessaries and Comforts of this present Life. How much more ought we to love, and be thankful to him who saves our Souls from eternal Death, and freely bestows on us all spiritual Blessings? Let us likewise trust and confide in him for all the good Things we stand in need of; let us depend upon his Merits and Mediation for the Pardon of our Sins; let us pray to him for his holy Spirit, for the Sanctification of our Natures, and for Assistance, Direction and Comfort, in all Circumstances, Temptations and Difficulties. He is not only able, but he is also willing to save us. His Death for us is a Demonstration of this. And let us devote our selves and all our Advantages to

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his Glory, and to the Cause of Religion and Virtue. As we live by the Son of God, let us live for him ; let us in Imitation of his Example, follow his Steps, and make it our great Business and Delight, to manifest the Wisdom, Goodness and Mercy of God, and to promote the Welfare and Happiness of Men. Let us look unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our Faith, and follow him with Ardor and Eagerness in the Ways of Piety and Virtue.

SECONDLY, Is Jesus Christ to appear at the End of the World, and to call all Mankind to his Judgment Seat ? What Manner of Persons ought we to be in all holy Conversation and Godliness, waiting for, and hastening to the coming of the Lord, when he shall descend from Heaven with a Shout, with the Voice of the Arch-angel, and the Trump of God ? Did we seriously believe this great Principle of Religion, what a mighty Influence would it have upon us ? Like the Apostle, we would labour, whether absent or present, in all Conditions, in all Places, and at all Times, to be accepted of him ; *for we must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ.* We intreat you, my Brethren, to be firmly persuaded of this awful Truth. Even the Light of Nature teaches us, that a future State of Rewards and Punishments is highly probable ; but Scripture demonstrates this Point ; *Life and Immortality are clearly brought to Light by the Gospel. He hath appointed a Day, in which he will judge the World in Righteousness, by that Man whom he hath ordained.* Our blessed Saviour hath peremptorily declared this, and he hath been true to his Word hitherto, whether in his Promises or in his Threatnings. He promised to send down the holy Ghost after his Ascension ; and that was fully

fully accomplished. He threatned to destroy *Jerusalem*, and he did so. He hath told us, *that he will come in the Clouds of Heaven, in flaming Fire, to punish the wicked, and to reward the righteous.* How should this Thought awaken us, that there is such a Promise on Record, by one who never failed in his Word. Let this Consideration always fill your Minds. Think continually, you hear the Sound of the last Trumpet, *Arise ye dead, and come to Judgment.* Let not the Pleasures, nor the Business of this World put far from you this important Consideration. Whether you think of it, or not, this Day will come. And if it should come before you are prepared for it, your Business, your Pleasures, your Riches, your Honours will be of no Benefit to you. Think then of the Day of the Lord, and think of it in such a Manner as to prepare thy self for it. Leave all thy wicked Thoughts and Practices; court the Favour of him that is to be thy Judge, submit to his Scepter, pay a willing Obedience to his Laws. *Be wise therefore, O ye Kings, and be instructed, ye Judges of the Earth. Serve the Lord with Fear and Trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the Way, when his Wrath is kindled but a little.*

THIRDLY, Shall all true Christians appear with Jesus Christ in Glory? This teaches us that while we are here in this World, we should endeavour to be like our Saviour. Thus reasons the Apostle, *1. John iii. 2. We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is; and every Man that hath this Hope in him, purifies himself even as he is pure,* that is, he sets the Example of Jesus Christ before him, and imitates him in all his imitable Perfections. As it was by a patient Continuance in well,
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doing, and a perfect Submission to the divine Will, that Jesus Christ merited the Glory in which he will appear at the Day of Judgment, so your Bodies must be cleansed, and your Souls purified from all sensual, worldly, vain and wicked Inclinations, and you must be holy as God is holy, if you would partake of his Happiness, and share of his Glory. There is no Agreement between Light and Darkness, no Concord between God and *Belial*, no Fellowship between Jesus Christ and Sinners. 'Tis true, after all your Endeavours to become holy upon Earth, you shall still be far short of that Holiness which becomes the Appearance of Jesus Christ. But you must use your best Endeavours, *and press towards the Mark, for the Prize of the high Calling of God, in Christ Jesus. Without Holiness, no Man shall see the Lord.* Not that wicked Men shall not likewise appear at the Day of Judgment, and do Homage to the Son of God. But they shall not appear in Glory : They shall appear cloathed in Shame and Confusion, in dreadful Expectation of the terrible Sentence to be pronounced upon them. So that you must either give over all Thoughts of appearing with Jesus Christ in Glory, or you must prepare your selves for that Appearance by Faith and Love, by Purity and Holiness. Christian, thy Life is in Heaven ; there is thy Happiness and thy Glory. Do not debase thy self by pursuing the mean and base Enjoyments of this World, and which are but Shadows of Felicity, whilst thou neglectest the Body and the Substance, Jesus Christ. Imitate the Children of the World in their Ambition. Those among them that are nobly born, and much more those that are Heirs to a Crown and Kingdom, will not engage in any low Employment,

ployment, nor descend to a mean Action. As for thee, thou art of heavenly Extraction, a Brother to Angels, an Heir to an immortal Diadem and never-failing Kingdom. Keep in Mind thine Honour and Dignity. Disdain to mix with the Slaves of the Earth? scorn to stoop to their mean and gross Delights; raise thy Thoughts to Heaven; meditate on the Glory in which thou shalt appear at the great Day; do nothing unworthy the Son of a King, of the King of Heaven.

FOURTHLY, Is Jesus Christ to appear to take Vengeance on all them that know not God, nor obey the Gospel of his Son? This is Matter of great Terror to the wicked World. Now you put far away the Thoughts of the Appearance of Jesus Christ, you insolently break his Laws, you abuse his Favours, you trample under Foot the Son of God, you declare by your wicked Lives, *that you will not have him to reign over you*; you say, that the Lord delayeth his Coming, you beat your Fellow-Servant. But profane and wicked Man, *the Lord is not slack concerning his Promise*. There is a Day coming, and perhaps is near at Hand, when thou shalt pay dear for thy Folly and Madness; when he whom thou now rejectest and despisest, and whose Laws thou castest behind thy Back, shall *appear in the Glory of his Father, with all his holy Angels*; and punish thee according to thy Deserts. What Horror and Amazement will seize thee, when raised out of the Grave, thou shalt behold the Son of God whom thou hast made thine Enemy, coming in Power and Majesty? How wilt thou shrink back from the Light, and wish to hide thy self again in the Grave. Yonder comes he whose Laws I have broken, whose Love I have despised,

despised, whose Name I have blasphemed ; he comes in terrible Wrath ; wretched and forlorn, how shall I abide his Appearance, or whither shall I flee from his Presence ? Mountains, Mountains fall upon me, Hills cover me from his Sight. But the Hills and Mountains will melt away, and nothing shall be left but thy self for his fiery Indignation. Thou shalt be dragged to his Judgment Seat. How wilt thou endure the Face of thy Judge ? Where wilt thou hide thy self from the Lightning of his Eyes ? Hell with all it's Torments is not to be compared to the Look of an angry God. *He that made thee, will have no Mercy upon thee, and he that formed thee, will show thee no Favour.*

LASTLY, Shall we appear with Jesus Christ in Glory ? This is Matter of great Comfort and Joy to the good Man, under all the Afflictions of this Life. Faithful Christian, thou art while in this World, liable to great Afflictions and Calamities ; thou art subject to Pain and Sickness, to Poverty and Want, to Shame and Disgrace, to Crosses and Disappointments, to Persecution and Death ; thy Graces are weak, thy Temptations many and strong, thy Saviour out of Sight, beyond the highest Heavens. But be of a good Courage ; yet a little while and all these Things shall come to an End, *and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry.* Yet a little while and thy Body shall become like unto the glorious Body of the Son of God, and thy Soul shall be raised to the highest Degree of Perfection and Happiness. Yet a little while and thou shall be purified from all Sin and Corruption, and consequently from all Misery, and taken up into the Air to meet thy Saviour. These light Afflictions shall work for thee *a far more exceeding*
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and eternal Weight of Glory. Thy Saviour suffered much greater Afflictions than any thou art liable to, Sin only excepted. But the Glory he had before him, made him patiently endure the Cross, and despise the Shame. And now he is set down at the right Hand of God. Be thou likewise steadfast, and thou shalt obtain the Crown of Life. Lift up thy Head with Joy and rejoicing, for thy Redemption draweth nigh. Thy Deliverance may come sooner than thou thinkest of. The End of all Things, may be, is at Hand. Perhaps the Order is already given in Heaven for the general Judgement of the World ; perhaps the Angels are already summoned to attend the Son of God ; perhaps he is just about to appear in Glory ; perhaps the Sound of the last Trumpet will this Moment fill our Ears. *Come, even so come, Lord Jesus.*

NOW, to him that sitteth upon the Throne, and the Lamb that was slain, and hath redeemed us from our Sins in his Blood, and will give us to appear with him in Glory, be Honour and Majesty, the Dominion and Power, for ever, and ever. A M E N.

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